

"Billy Swelvetrees"

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MARY HARTMAN

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EPISODE #115

by

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FINAL DRAFT
5/12/76

VTR DATE:

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MARY.	LOUISE LASSER
TOM	GREG MULLAVEY
MARTHA.	DODY GOODMAN
GEORGE.	PHIL BRUNS
CATHY	DEBRALEE SCOTT
GRANDPA LARKIN.	VICTOR KILIAN
BETTY McCULLOUGH.	VIVIAN BLAINE
HOWARD McCULLOUGH	BEESON CARROLL
ED McCULLOUGH	LARRY HADDON
BARTENDER	
JOLENE.	
JOYCE	
BILLY TWELVETREES	
TWO GUYS	

SETS

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ACT ONESCENE 1

CAPRI LOUNGE - NIGHT, ABOUT AN
HOUR AFTER EPISODE #114

TOM, AT THE BAR, IS CONCENTRATING ON GETTING DRUNK. JOLENE, WITH HER BACK TO THE BAR, IS ON ONE SIDE OF HIM, BUFFING HER NAILS, BORED. SHE GLANCES SIDEWAYS AT TOM, WHO DOWNS A SHOT, AND FOLLOWS IT WITH A SWALLOW OF BEER. DISGUSTED, SHE NUDGES JOYCE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOM.

JOYCE

(TURNING AROUND TO HER) Yeah?

JOLENE

C'mon, let's go.

JOYCE

I'm having a drink, Jolene. D'you mind?

JOLENE

You're wasting your time, Joyce. He's getting fried.

TOM

(TO OFFSTAGE BARTENDER, HOLDING UP A SHOT GLASS) Hit me again, Buzz.

JOLENE

(TO JOYCE) He had four drinks to our one.

JOYCE

(TO JOLENE) Just relax, okay?

TOM

(LOUDER) Buzz! Fill 'er up.

JOLENE

I'm telling you, he's drunk.

JOYCE

Well, I think he's cute. (SHE TURNS TO
TOM) Tom?

TOM

What d'you have to do to get a drink
around here?

JOYCE

Maybe you've had enough, huh?

TOM

Maybe I haven't. (TO OFFSTAGE BARTENDER)
Buzz!

JOYCE

Hey, Tommy, how about going somewhere
and getting something to eat?

TOM

I'm not hungry.

JOYCE

We could go to my place and you could
maybe call a friend for Jolene?

TOM

I don't have any friends.

JOYCE

Sure you do. What happened to that guy you were bowling with? Ed. Maybe he'll be back.

TOM

In a pig's ear.

JOYCE

What?

TOM

Forget about Ed.

JOYCE

How come? What made him go off so fast like he did? What did he say to you?

TOM

He had to see a man about a... a man.

(HE LAUGHS DRUNKENLY AT HIS DUMB JOKE)

JOYCE

Are you drunk?

TOM

No, but I'm trying. (HE CALLS OFF TO THE BARTENDER) C'mon, Buzz, get the lead out!

THE BARTENDER APPROACHES AND REFILLS TOM'S SHOT GLASS, AND MOVES OFF.

JOYCE

(PLAYING WITH TOM'S EAR) Tommy, you're not going to be good for much if you keep chugalugging those Boilermakers.

TOM

(FORGETTING HER NAME) Hey, look...

JOYCE

Joyce.

TOM

Joyce, do I tell you how to drive your truck? No, so don't tell me how to drink, okay? (HE DOWNS THE SHOT) I can stop any time I wanna. I just don't happen to wanna.

HE DRINKS THE BEER. JOLENE POKES JOYCE AND LOOKS TOWARD THE ENTRY, WHERE TWO GUYS ARE CASING THE JOINT. JOYCE LOOKS, AGREES THAT THEY ARE MUCH BETTER PROSPECTS, AND GETS DOWN OFF HER STOOL.

JOYCE

(TO TOM) Listen, thanks for the drink. It's been real nice talking to you, but a couple of acquaintances of ours just came in, so we'll see you around, okay?

SHE AND JOLENE MOSEY OFF TOWARDS THE GUYS. TOM DOESN'T SEEM TO NOTICE THEY LEFT.

TOM

(TO OFFSTAGE BARTENDER) How about some service here? (HE HOLDS UP HIS SHOT GLASS)

CUT TO:

SCENE 2MARY'S KITCHEN

WHERE HOWARD IS HOLDING UP HIS
COFFEE CUP IN A TOAST TO MARY.

HOWARD

To America's typical consumer.

MARY

(SLIGHTLY NUMB) I can't believe it.

HOWARD

I think it's terrific.

MARY

I can't believe it.

HOWARD

Well, it's true, Mary. I was right here
when the call came.

MARY

I'm not dreaming this?

HOWARD

You're certainly not.

MARY

(DAZED) Out of everybody in the whole
entire U.S. of A. I was chosen? Me,
Mary Hartman?

HOWARD

That's right, Mary. You're going to be
on national television. You, Mary
Hartman.

A LOW FLYING PLANE COMES OVER
THE HOUSE, THE NOISE GAINING IN
INTENSITY.

MARY

I can't believe it. (RAISING HER VOICE)
And I can't believe this noise! Why
do the planes make more noise flying
over my house than anybody else's?
It's making me very nervous, Howard.
Very, very nervous.

HOWARD

(AS THE NOISE RECEDES) It has something
to do with altered flight patterns. It
was on the news.

MARY

But why do they alter them to fly
directly over this house? Why?

HOWARD

I don't really think they did, Mary.

MARY

Of course they didn't. I'm just feeling
a little shaky, that's all. A lot has
happened to me today. I mean, Dennis
and Tom and national television. I'll
smoke a cigarette. No, I shouldn't smoke
so much. I'll eat something. What'll I
eat? I feel like something sweet.
(SHE LOOKS AROUND, CROSSES TO THE
CUPBOARD)

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I bought some Nestle's Crunch Bars.
They're here some place. (SHE SEARCHES)
I can't find them. Good, I'm glad I
can't find them. Sugar is bad for you.

HOWARD

(SYMPATHETICALLY) Mary, you do seem
awfully nervous.

MARY

Well, of course I'm nervous. They're
going to be here in the morning.

HOWARD

Who?

MARY

The T.V. people. They're going to make
a documentary about me. They're going
to be here the whole week.

HOWARD

That sounds really exciting.

MARY

(PANICKED) What if I'm not up to it,
Howard? What if I can't go through with
it? I don't think I can, Howard. Too
much has happened. I feel very nervous.
I feel shaky. I'm scared.

HOWARD

You're going to be just fine, Mary. I
think it's just what you needed to get
you out of the doldrums.

TAP TAP ON THE BACK DOOR. BETTY
POKES HER HEAD IN.

BETTY

Yoo-hoo, anybody home? Oh, hello Howard,
I thought you might be here.

HOWARD

Anything wrong, Mother?

BETTY

No, no. I just dropped by to say hello.

MARY

Hello, Betty.

BETTY

Hello, Mary. If you and Howard want to
be alone, I'll just run along.

HOWARD

I was about to leave. Mary's just had
some exciting news, but she's tired and
I've got to read through some reports
for tomorrow.

BETTY

Oh, well, in that case I'll just stay
a minute or so because there's something
I want to talk to Mary about.

HOWARD

Don't be too long, Mother. (TO MARY)
Goodnight, Mary. And, again,
congratulations.

HE EXITS, AS MARY CALLS OUT
GOODNIGHT TO HIM.

BETTY

(AFTER A PREGNANT PAUSE) Mary, this may
be the most important conversation I've
ever had -- with anyone!

FADE OUT.

ACT TWOTHE SAME - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

MARY AND BETTY EXACTLY AS WE
LEFT THEM.

MARY

I don't know if I'm up to a very important
conversation, Betty.

BETTY

Oh, I'm sure you are.

MARY

Because I just had a very important
telephone call.

BETTY

Is that why Howard congratulated you?

MARY

Yes, I've just been named America's
Typical Consumer and I'm going to be
on national television.

BETTY

Congratulations.

MARY

Only, I'm very nervous about it.

BETTY

I foresaw it, y'know.

MARY

That I'd be nervous?

BETTY

That television was going to play a very important role in your future. Just like I foresaw what I'm going to talk to you about now.

MARY

What?

BETTY

Howard.

MARY

Howard? Would you like some coffee?

BETTY

No, thank you, Mary. I don't want to keep you up. Howard said you were tired.

MARY

Well, it's not tired so much as the fact that I'm keyed up.

BETTY

I'm sure Howard's right. He seems so aware of your feelings.

MARY

Actually, I'm more tense than tired.

BETTY

You and Howard have become such good friends in such a short time. It's just a marvel to me, Mary.

MARY

Edgy, that's the way I feel. I think I will have a cigarette even though I'm trying to give up smoking.

SHE FINDS ONE AND LIGHTS IT UP
THROUGH:

BETTY

Anyway, Mary, that's why I thought I could come and tell you what's in my heart.

MARY

About Howard?

BETTY

About how important you are to Howard.

MARY

Oh, that's nice, Betty, I'm really glad to hear that. I am important to Howard?

BETTY

More important than you realize. More important than he realizes.

MARY

(A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HOW THE CONVERSATION IS GOING) Do you feel like eating when you're nervous?

BETTY

Sometimes.

MARY

Smoking is supposed to cut down on that feeling, but here I am, smoking and I still feel like eating.

BETTY

Mary, I hope I'm not upsetting you by talking about Howard?

MARY

Oh no, I was upset before you started talking about Howard.

BETTY

Is it because you know about Ed and Howard?

MARY

No, that's not why. It's because of everything else. Like, for instance, the T.V. crew that's coming here tomorrow, and Heather and what she thinks, and Tom and Dennis.

BETTY

Good. I'm glad it's not because of Ed and Howard's relationship.

MARY

Oh, you don't have to worry about that. I mean, just because Howard is a... that doesn't mean we still can't be friends. I'm very fond of Howard, and even though I was surprised to find out that he was a... a, you know, that was only because I'd never known any before. But it doesn't make any difference. No difference at all.

BETTY

That's just the point, Mary, I don't think Howard is a homosexual.

MARY

What?

BETTY

If he were, I'd accept it, but you see, what I really think is that Howard is a latent heterosexual.

MARY

I beg your pardon?

BETTY

Everything points in that direction.

MARY

What direction?

BETTY

Your direction, Mary. He spends almost all his free time over here. He talks about you constantly. He thinks about you. He cares about you, and that's **not** all.

MARY

There's more?

BETTY

There's signs.

MARY

(THINKING LITERALLY) Oh no, no, there aren't any signs pointing to me.

BETTY

(NODDING) Supernatural signs. Your natal charts -- numerology. The taro cards. Mary, you're the only one who can prove to Howard that he's not what he thinks he is.

MARY

(ABASHED) Oh no, I couldn't. I could never tell him that.

BETTY

I don't want you to tell him. I want you to show him.

MARY

Show him?

BETTY

Mary, I want you to take him to bed.

MARY

(BEAT; SURE SHE'S HEARD WRONG) What?

BETTY

It's the only way to prove that his feelings about you are those feelings.

MARY

(ANOTHER BEAT) Did you ever have the feeling you're losing your mind? I thought I just heard you say you wanted me to sleep with Howard. And not only that, I'm hungry. I feel like eating popcorn. Popcorn and a Slurpee. First it was Nestle's Crunch Bars, and now it's popcorn and a Slurpee. I must be going crazy.

BETTY

Mary, before you go crazy, take my son and sleep with him. You're the only important relationship Howard has had except for Ed. And it's not that I have anything against Ed. He's a wonderful person, of course.

A PLANE IS HEARD FAR OFF APPROACHING,
GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER.

BETTY

(CONTINUING) But, Mary, I just know that two people would be happier if they're not the same kind.

THE PLANE IS REALLY LOUD THIS TIME,
COMPLETELY DROWNING OUT MARY'S
PROTEST. ALL SHE CAN DO IS HOLD
HER HEAD, AS WE:

FADE OUT.

ACT THREESHUMWAY KITCHEN - NIGHT

GRANDPA IS COOKING PRUNES. HE TAKES A FORK, UNCOVERS THE POT, TESTS THEM TO SEE IF THEY ARE DONE. CATHY COMES HOME FROM HER DATE WITH CLETE.

CATHY

Hi, Grandpa. What are you doing up so late?

GRANDPA

Cooking prunes.

CATHY

At this hour?

GRANDPA

Somebody's got to do it and your mother's too busy.

CATHY

(GIVING HIM A HUG) Ah-h, I would have done it for you.

GRANDPA

You're too busy, too. What with two jobs and a new boyfriend. I'm the only one with nothing to do around here. Except for maybe the new boarder.

CATHY

What new boarder?

GRANDPA

The one Martha and what's-his-name went to pick up at the bus station. Chief Sitting Bull, or whatever.

CATHY

(EXCITED) He's here, in Fernwood?

GRANDPA

Yeah, he's here.

CATHY

Oh, wow, I can't wait to see him.

GRANDPA

What's everybody so excited about him for?

CATHY

Are you kidding? He's mother's real father. A Choctaw Indian!

GRANDPA

If he's your mother's real father, what does that make me?

CATHY

Ah, Grandpa, don't be jealous.

GRANDPA

I've been your ma's pa for fifty-one years, and nobody ever made a fuss over me. Now this Choctaw Indian comes along and you're think he was Lawrence Welk!

CATHY

Don't you worry, Grandpa, Mom still loves
you and so do I. You'll always be Grandpa
to me.

SHE KISSES HIM AS THE DOOR
BURSTS OPEN AND MARTHA, GEORGE
AND CHIEF BILLY TWELVE-TREES
ENTER.

MARTHA

Here we are!

GEORGE

Come right on in, Billy, and make
yourself t'home.

BILLY

Thanks, George.

MARTHA

(TO GRANDPA, REALLY EXCITED) Pa, I want
you to meet my Pa.

BILLY STICKS OUT HIS HAND.

BILLY

I'm mighty pleased to meet you, Mr.
Larkin.

GRANDPA

Oh yeah?

MARTHA

(DISAPPROVING) Pa.

BOTH MEN TURN TO HER AND ANSWER
IN UNISON.

GRANDPA

What d'you want, Martha?

BILLY

Yes, my dear?

MARTHA

Oh, dear, this is going to be very
confusing.

CATHY

(TO BILLY) I'm Cathy.

BILLY

My granddaughter.

GRANDPA

My granddaughter.

GEORGE

Oh boy. Now listen, Grandpa, just simmer
down.

GRANDPA

(TO GEORGE) You simmer down.

CATHY

(SOTTO VOCE TO MARTHA) He's jealous.

MARTHA

(TO GRANDPA) Oh, Pa, you're not jealous,
are you?

BILLY

I sure hope not, Mr. Larkin, because
I have nothing but respect and admiration
for the wonderful job you've done taking
care of my little girl here.

HE PUTS HIS ARM AROUND MARTHA.

GRANDPA

Your little girl?

BILLY

Our little girl.

GRANDPA

That's more like it.

BILLY

Of course, if I'd only known about her,
I could have saved you the trouble,
because I would have had her with me all
these years.

MARTHA

And I'd probably be a circus performer
now.

CATHY

What?

MARTHA

Well, that's what your Grandpa Billy was.
He's been a circus performer, a rodeo
rider, an oil worker, and I've saved the
most exciting for last -- a movie star.
(TO BILLY) Does that run in families,
too, like the circus?

BILLY

Well, I wasn't a star, Martha, just an
extra. When I was a lot younger.

GRANDPA

An extra what?

BILLY

(REMINISCING) Oh, I played with some
of the greats - Ken Maynard, Hoot Gibson...

GEORGE

Tom Mix?

BILLY

(NODDING) Harry Carey. You name 'em, I was shot by 'em. Bit the dust so many times, I got to like the stuff.

MARTHA

My own father a movie star.

CATHY

Gee, maybe Clete could do an interview on the news.

MARTHA

(TO BILLY) Sit down, Pa, and let me get you some coffee and cake.

GEORGE

How about a drink, Billy? I've been saving some Old Granddad for a special occasion like this.

BILLY

Oh, I don't drink.

ALL EXCEPT GRANDPA EXCLAIM OVER THIS.

GEORGE

Hey, c'mon, everybody knows about Indians and fire water.

BILLY

Not this Indian. I'm A.A., Alcoholics Anonymous. Haven't touched a drop in twelve years.

MARTHA

Isn't that wonderful? It is, isn't it?

GEORGE

Too bad Tom isn't.

CATHY

Tell me about Hollywood, Grandpa Billy.

What was it like in the old days?

BILLY

(SETTLING IN FOR ONE OF HIS TALL TALES)

Well, I never will forget this here party

I went to at Clara Bow's. It was a real wingding. Everybody was there -- Richard

Bartholomew, Lillian Gish, Jean Harlow,

Fatty Arbuckle.

THEY ARE ALL CROWDING AROUND HIM,
FASCINATED, ALL EXCEPT GRANDPA
LARKIN, WHO FEELS NEGLECTED AND
LEFT OUT.

GRANDPA

(AT THE STOVE, TESTING THE PRUNES)

At least the prunes are done. That's
one good thing.

FADE OUT.

ACT FOURMARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MARY IS SITTING ON THE SIDE OF
THE BED CONTEMPLATING THREE
DIFFERENT NON-HABIT FORMING
SLEEPING AIDS.

MARY

I definitely need a sleeping aid, but
which one?

SHE PICKS UP THE SOMINEX, READS
FROM THE BOTTLE.

MARY (CONT'D)

For occasional sleeplessness.

SHE PUTS IT BACK, PICKS UP THE
SLEEP-EZE.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hospital tested for effectiveness.

(PUTS IT BACK, PICKS UP THE NYTOL)

Zzzzzzz.

SHE PUTS THAT ONE BACK AND STUDIES
THE THREE OF THEM, CHOOSING THE
NYTOL.

MARY (CONT'D)

Zzzzzzzz. That definitely sounds best,
although I don't think anything will
help me sleep tonight... Too much on my
mind.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Dennis. (SHE SHAKES HER HEAD) Can't
think about him. Howard. Don't want
to think about him. Tom...

SHE OPENS THE NYTOL BOTTLE, BUT
HEARS A....

SOUND: DOOR SLAM OFFSTAGE

MARY (CONT'D)

(FRIGHTENED) Someone's here. Who?

SHE PUTS THE NYTOL BACK AND
LOOKS TOWARD THE DOOR, WHICH
OPENS. TOM STANDS THERE, WEAVING
BACK AND FORTH, VERY DRUNK.

MARY (CONT'D)

Tom!

TOM

(HIS SPEECH SLURRED) "Sokay, Mary, I'm
not going to bother you. Just gonna
sleep on the couch. Not gonna bother
you.

MARY

You're drunk.

TOM

Jus' go and get a blanket and a pillow...
sleep on the couch.

HE STAGGERS TOWARD THE BED AND
FLOPS DOWN.

MARY

Tom, what are you doing here?

TOM

No place else to go.

MARY

The McCullough's made you leave, right?

TOM

Can't go back there, Mary.

MARY

Because of your drinking?

TOM

Not because of that. Because of...

them... Ed and Howard... what they are.

MARY

You didn't know about them?

TOM

Didn't know about them. (HE LOOKS AT

HER) You knew about them?

MARY

(NODDING) Yes, I knew about them.

TOM

You knew!!?

MARY

Tom, what's so bad about what they are?

- which one of them might not even be.

What's so terrible?

TOM

Didn't say it was terrible. Just can't stay there any more. Can't. Don't want people to think -- not that they would

-- but don't worry, Mary, I'll find a place to stay tomorrow.

MARY

Tom, this is your house, and this is your bed, and this is your wife.

TOM

It's okay, Mary, gonna sleep on the couch. Don't have to worry about me spoiling things for you with Foley 'cause I'll be outta the way... Just wanna sleep on the couch... (AND HE GENTLY FALLS BACK ON THE BED, OUT LIKE A LIGHT)

MARY

Tom...

NO RESPONSE. MARY GENTLY SHAKES HIM.

MARY (CONT'D)

There isn't any more Dennis. He's out of my life, Tom.

TOM MAKES SOME DRUNKEN UNINTELLIGIBLE NOISE.

MARY (CONT'D)

Please, Tom, listen to me. I said goodbye to Dennis tonight. I'm never going to see him again. Did you hear me?

TOM

(OPENING HIS EYES BRIEFLY) Heard you...

MARY

(PLEADING) It's all over with Dennis. Finished.

TOM

(HIS EYES FLUTTERING) Yeah, yeah...
heard that before. (HE CLOSES HIS EYES
AND FALLS HEAVILY ASLEEP)

MARY

Tom, wake up.

NO RESPONSE.

MARY (CONT'D)

I need you, Tom. I'm very confused. I'm
all mixed up about things. I want you
to stay here. Look, I'll help you, Tom.
Maybe we can help each other.

SHE BEGINS TO TAKE OFF HIS SHOES
AND LOOSEN HIS BELT, TALKING ALL
THE WHILE.

MARY (CONT'D)

Can you hear me, Tom? Please hear me.
Because I love you and I need you, and
the only reason I got involved with
Dennis is because you hurt me. I don't
think you wanted to hurt me, but then
I didn't mean to hurt you, either. But
maybe things will be all right because
something wonderful's happened, Tom.
I'm America's Typical Consumer and the
T.V. crew is going to be here tomorrow.
Isn't that wonderful? Only I'm scared,
Tom.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I should really be happy, but I'm -- I'm not happy, and Heather's not happy and you're not happy -- and I'm never going to get to sleep tonight. I wish you could just hold me, Tom. Could you do that?

NO RESPONSE.

MARY (CONT'D)

I guess not. (SHE KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK) Goodnight, Tom. Sleep tight and don't let the bedbugs bite. (HER EYES FILL WITH TEARS)

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE #115